Report from the First Broadband Opportunity Summit

February 25, 2009

The Newseum, Washington, D.C.

Hosted by:

National Urban League | Empowering Communities. Changing Lives.

NCLR NATIONAL COUNCIL OF LA RAZA

JOINT CENTER FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES

MMTC Minority Media & Telecom Council

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Table of Contents

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BROADBAND OPPORTUNITY SUMMIT

Executive Summary

The Summit

On February 25, 2009, 30 leaders from diverse backgrounds and perspectives convened to determine how broadband policies can best advance the interests and needs of communities of color. The Broadband Opportunity Summit (the "Summit") convened an august group of policy makers, representatives from civil rights organizations, and industry experts to address the nexus between broadband adoption among people of color in disadvantaged urban and rural communities and three vital policy areas for the Obama administration: **education**, **healthcare**, and **energy and the environment**. The aim of the Summit was to arrive at new insights that can be acted on individually, through collective action, through organizational expertise, or by recommending change in government and business policies.

The half-day meeting, conducted in a moderated roundtable dialog reflecting the Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program format, was driven by a detailed agenda and facilitated by the Aspen Institute's Charlie Firestone. Like the Aspen meetings, the Summit was a small, off-the-record, by-invitation-only meeting designed to encourage candor, free exchange of ideas, and creativity of thought.

Summary of Report

This Report summarizes the results of the Summit and attempts to capture some specific recommended outcomes from the Summit. The various insights provided by the Summit Roundtable participants have been captured in a way that can be of use to the Obama Administration in formulating policies on broadband in general and, particularly, its broadband policies relating to the three vital policy areas of education, healthcare, and energy/environment and their impact on people of color.

As this Report documents, the dialog between the participants was vigorous and insightful and, most importantly, represented the sincere desires of the participants to identify problems and barriers that are specific to the communities represented by the Summit, i.e., communities of color in rural and urban America, with an emphasis on socially, financially, or culturally disadvantaged members of these communities. For purposes of this Report, the targeted communities of color will be referred to as the "Constituent Communities."

Painting the Vision

Participants at the Summit expressed an overarching concern that, even when broadband is **available** and **affordable** for members of the Constituent Communities (i.e., eliminating the "access" barrier), it is not necessarily adopted [1] due to factors such as:

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[1] According to the 2008 Pew Internet and American Life Project, African Americans and Hispanics lag significantly behind the national averages for broadband subscription rates.

- a lack of understanding of how broadband benefits them;
- lack of technical knowledge and training, i.e., "digital literacy";
- lack of relevant content;
- language/linguistic barriers;
- fear/privacy concerns;
- other culturally-specific or unspecified factors related to the online experience.[2]

In collaboration with industry stakeholders and with the support of federal, state, and local political leaders and community groups, Summit participants expressed a desire to "**paint a vision**" for the Constituent Communities of how life with broadband is no longer a luxury, but is essential to the ability to participate meaningfully in society.[3] Summit participants generally were in agreement that painting a vision of the benefits of broadband would include demonstrating how broadband can help to:

- enhance K-12 and higher education opportunities through "virtual education";
- allow online job search and application;
- encourage comparison shopping for prescription medication;
- reduce costs, ease the burdens of fixed income individuals, and reduce energy consumption via "telework" or "telecommuting";
- stay better in touch with family and loved ones;
- ease social isolation/depression;
- increase access to news and information;
- increase preventative and chronic care through telehealth applications (including mental/behavioral health services such as "telepsychiatry");
- access customer service platforms for business enterprises;
- access state and local government services ("e-government");
- engage in meaningful civic participation.

Broadband Adoption in the Constituent Communities
While participants discussed a number of barriers to broadband access and adoption, the principal finding was that stimulating **adoption** of broadband services should be the top policy outcome, and that steps could be taken immediately to achieve that outcome.

Consistent with this finding, since the Summit, the Host Groups have participated in proceedings before the FCC and the NTIA advocating the importance of broadband adoption and telecom literacy in the Constituent Communities[4] and they, along with others, will continue to advocate on behalf of

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[2] Based on the experiences of some of the Summit representatives, there are culturally specific or unspecified obstacles that can affect not only the level of broadband adoption, but also the ability to gather broadband adoption data in the Constituent Communities, suggesting that effective training and data gathering must be conducted by persons of perceived trust in the communities that are targeted for outreach efforts.

[3] Summit participants noted that local leaders will have to be educated because many elected officials do not understand the importance of broadband adoption any more than their constituents.

[4] *See* Letter to FCC Acting Chairman Michael Copps on March 31st (Appendix III, attached) expressing the Host Groups' support for Chairman Copps' initiation of a comprehensive review of the FCC's role in formulating a "national

small disadvantaged businesses (SDBs), minority business enterprises (MBEs), and other entities that are committed to improving broadband adoption and digital literacy in the Constituent Communities.

In addition to submitting a letter to FCC Chairman Copps supporting broadband adoption,[5] many participants in the Summit, along with other civil rights groups, supported comments filed at the NTIA with regard to the manner in which the broadband stimulus grants should be administered (the "BTOP Grants"). With respect to broadband adoption, the petitioners' comments generally urged the NTIA to award BTOP grants that:

- stimulate broadband adoption and telecom literacy for low-income, minority and multicultural consumers;
- fund SDBs, MBEs and other organizations that have a demonstrated commitment and ability to support local community-based projects, and that are culturally and linguistically competent to provide products and services for low-income, minority, and multicultural communities; and
- urged the NTIA to recognize that the $250 million slated for broadband adoption in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act establishes a floor, not a ceiling, for broadband adoption efforts.

Conclusion
Too often, gatherings such as this one end up with a number of talented people sitting around a table engaged in an intellectual debate that fails to generate decisive action. In this case, however, the Host Groups not only agreed that the Summit would be just the first of many efforts to advance the technology needs and the interests of the Constituent Communities, but they have already become active participants in the Obama Administration's efforts to implement a universal broadband policy that leaves no one behind.

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broadband policy," and to apprise Chairman Copps of the Host Groups' intention to participate fully in the FCC's deliberations on behalf of their constituents. *See also,* Comments of Broadband Diversity Supporters In the Matter of The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Joint Request for Information and Notice of Public Meetings, Docket No. 090309298-9229-01, filed April 13, 2009.

[5] See note 4 above.

I.   Background

On February 24, 2009, President Barack Obama gave his first address to a joint session of Congress, urging the country to come together to address important social and economic needs in the areas of health care, education, and energy and the environment. On the very next morning, the first Broadband Opportunity Summit convened at the Newseum in Washington, D.C.; over 30 of the "best minds" from organizations representing "vulnerable" groups, including people of color, senior citizens, and urban and rural disadvantaged communities (the "Constituent Communities"), gathered to understand how broadband can address these important goals in the Constituent Communities and to identify what barriers stand in the way. Attendees included representatives from the public, private, academic, and nonprofit sectors (the "Roundtable Group") and are listed in Appendix II.

The Summit's hosts (the "Host Groups") included:

Marc Morial, President & CEO, National Urban League (NUL)
Janet Murguia, President & CEO, National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
Ralph B. Everett, President & CEO, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies (Joint Center)
David Honig, President & CEO, Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC)
Karen Narasaki, President & CEO, Asian American Justice Center (AAJC)

Charles Firestone, Executive Director of the Communications and Society Program at the Aspen Institute in Washington, D.C., served as Facilitator.

II.   Purpose of the Summit

The meeting represented a call to action to create policy recommendations for the Obama Administration on how broadband technology can advance the interests of members of the Constituent Communities and, thereby, help America to achieve the vital policy goals outlined in the President's February 24, 2009 address to Congress, i.e., **education**, **healthcare**, and **energy and the environment** (the "vital policy goals" or "areas").

III.   Presentations

The Summit featured presentations from three experts in the vital policy areas:

Education:
- **Susan Patrick**, President & CEO, International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)

Healthcare:
- **Richard Manning**, Senior Vice President, Strategic Projects & Services, WellMed

Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection:

- **Adele C. Morris**, Ph.D., Fellow & Deputy Director, Climate and Energy Economics, The Brookings Institution

Following the presentations, the Roundtable Group engaged in a discussion, facilitated by Mr. Firestone, on the ways in which broadband can further education, healthcare, and energy and environmental goals as they relate to the Constituent Communities. This section contains a summary of each presentation and the ensuing discussion.

A. Roundtable Observations on Education

Susan Patrick, President & CEO, International Association for K-12 Online Learning, presented on the subject of how broadband can and is being used to improve the K-12 education process via online learning applications.

Ms. Patrick's organization has 2,300 members, many of which are states and school districts that have financial concerns but that need online learning for remediation learning, advanced placement, and other programs. She reported that there are "a lot of disenfranchised kids who want to learn," and it is important to help decision makers understand the importance of broadband and online learning for expanding high quality education for the highest number of students possible.

Having had the opportunity to travel in 48 of the 50 states and internationally, Ms. Patrick believes that the U.S. can achieve the goal of providing a "world class" education for every student by using broadband. She noted, however, that a number of other countries have far surpassed the U.S. in capitalizing on the immense benefits of digitizing curriculum and online learning delivery.

International "virtual education" trends

Ms. Patrick reported that the World Future Society trends report listed "virtual education" in the Top 10 global trends to transform society as we know it. She reported that, internationally, the trends are further shifting toward e-learning in K-12 schools to expand access to educational opportunities:

- Singapore has 100% of secondary schools using online learning. Every year, Singapore holds "E-learning Week" and physically shuts down schools and ensures that all teachers and students can achieve continuity of learning through e-learning. Singapore does this as a disaster preparedness measure for schools – in case there is a national pandemic, they will be able to continue the delivery of their blended education using online learning in the classroom, as well as at any location.

- China has digitized its entire K-12 curriculum and plans in the next 10 years to offer online courses. China is also training master teachers to teach online to expand their reach of a high quality education to 100 million students in rural or underserved areas. The Chinese government has the authority to install the necessary telecom broadband infrastructure (to skip 3G implementation and go straight to 4G wireless broadband Internet) and expand access quickly to areas not being served. China plans to greatly expand online learning to a large number of students over the next five years as a key application over the broadband infrastructure.

- In Turkey, there was no online learning three years ago; but today, as a result of public-private partnerships, Turkey has scaled delivery of online courses quickly and now has 15 million students enrolled in online learning.

- Mexico is training their new teachers to use digital curriculum and teach online, and has a program that gives teachers laptops. They have digitized the entire K-12 curriculum in a national program.

- The renowned International Baccalaureate (IB) program is now offering an IB diploma program online in 125 countries, including the United States, across Europe and in some Asian countries.

E-learning trends in the U.S.

Ms. Patrick acknowledged that e-learning is available in the U.S. and 32 states have virtual schools or online learning programs (though only 18 states allow full-time virtual school programs). A number of colleges and universities are offering K-12 online courses and dual-enrollment programs. The course offerings are uneven from state to state and district to district depending on state policy, funding models, and leadership. She believes that if we are to make improvements in opening access for all students, we first need to acknowledge the urgent need for all students in the U.S. to have access to online learning, including advanced classes and high quality remediation learning opportunities to ensure that they graduate on-time and college-ready.

Ms. Patrick stressed that in order to reach our goal of getting U.S. students engaged in their education, we have to re-think the current K-12 education distribution model because traditional approaches are not working. Reportedly, 34% of U.S. students have no advanced placement classes available in their school. She also cited statistics highlighting the broadband "digital divide," especially in households earning under $25,000 per year. The digital divide is a major concern for students from low income households, she said, because even when they have access to broadband and e-learning at school, they may have limited access at home.

Ms. Patrick reported that online learning expands access to certain types of educational opportunities. The demand for online learning from students is overwhelming – there has been growth of 30% annually in student enrollment in the last 10 years, from 50,000 enrollments in 2000 to 1,000,000 enrollments in 2008 (47% growth in enrollments in the last two years, according to the Sloan Foundation).

She reported that there is a risk of exacerbating the "haves and have nots" conundrum if we do not expand access to educational opportunities for all students. Without a statewide program or state policy supporting funding for enrollments in online courses, only the wealthiest school districts can afford their own online learning programs. Although 32 states have "virtual schools" and 18 states have fulltime virtual school options, she said many of the state virtual schools are supported by annual appropriations limited by capped enrollments. In Georgia, there is such a high demand for students to take courses from the Georgia State Virtual Schools that, when appropriations run out, there is a long waiting list of children who want access to online classes.

Ms. Patrick further reported that the National Governors Association and the Council for Chief State School Officers are studying the academic curriculum of the top 10 ranked countries on the international PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) tests. When a "core curriculum" of the highest performing nations internationally is determined, it will be important for the United States to consider adoption of international-level academic standards. She said we must recognize that the U.S. has 50 different academic standards in all 50 states. Teacher training varies from state to state and institution to institution and is evaluated differently. In light of the fact that there are over 15,000 school districts in the U.S., she believes that development of a globally competitive model or a national set of core standards that could be advanced through high quality online learning is important to open access and prepare our students to succeed.

Conclusion

In order to achieve the goals of using broadband to make improvements in K-12 education in the U.S., Ms. Patrick made the following recommendations:

- Direct federal grant funds to ensure every student, regardless of geography, has access to high-quality online courses to help them graduate on time with the skills they need to be successful in college, the workforce and life.

- Encourage states seeking BTOP federal stimulus funding from the Department of Commerce to aggregate demand for broadband infrastructure by making virtual schools an integral part of the education system (e.g., establish "anchor tenant" to leverage build-out by coordinating business/community/higher education/K-12 education/municipal broadband needs and usage).

- Lift the statutory prohibition on the Department of Education's ability to explore national K-12 curriculum standards.

- Initiate a study to determine the appropriate broadband speed for educational institutions, and including distance and e-learning.

Key Themes from the Roundtable Discussion Concerning Education

More than one Roundtable participant used the term "Sputnik moment" to define the extent to which the American educational system and technology have fallen behind other countries (particularly in terms of education technology), despite the extensive schools and libraries subsidies contained in the Telecommunications Act of 1996. At the most basic level, participants expressed concern that children need to complete their homework online, but their parents can't assist them because of a lack of access to computers or the technical knowledge or training. At a broader level, participants supported public school/private school partnerships in order for public school teachers and students (if appropriate) to take advantage of the technological advancements that are often available at private schools. With respect to adult English language learning ("ELL") needs of immigrant populations, one participant noted that long distance and computer-assisted learning are keys to solving educational language barriers. Participants underscored that broadband is instrumental to increasing post-secondary opportunities.

Representative Observations on Education

- Most of our conversations about literacy and learning focus on the past. To repeat the successes of the past in literacy and learning, we need to bring broadband into the mix. Those without access to the online world will not make it. All students need digital access to improve their potential, and digital participation in minority communities is essential. Broadband access, adoption and affordability are priorities for the Joint Center for these reasons. Together with people here and people not in this room, we can create lifelong learning opportunities for people in our communities. *Ralph Everett, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies.*

- Thirteen years after the passage of the Telecommunications Act (and despite its extensive subsidies for telecommunications for schools and libraries), we are still talking about gross disparities in education technology; as a result, America faces another "Sputnik moment" [with respect to our education policies]. *Riley Temple, Temple Strategies.*

- We need to upgrade school broadband facilities to ensure that the ultimate speed to the end-user is really broadband. Current school infrastructure can't support multiple simultaneous users. We also need to target technology dollars for online teaching and in-service training. *Susan Patrick, iNACOL.*

- We have worked with language minority communities and have experience with how broadband can improve access to critical translated information in our communities, particularly in the areas of healthcare and public safety. We also believe that broadband offers promising solutions to adult ELL (English language learning) barriers for immigrant populations. We can't find and hire enough translators, so providing different translations for long distance and computer-assisted learning is a promising solution. *Karen Narasaki, AAJC.*

- Broadband can create a new path to accessing higher education, the cost of which has risen out of reach for many working families. We need to develop a dynamic model– the "18 year old goes away to college" model is no longer the norm. The big growth these days is in community colleges, both for young students and adults pursuing "lifelong learning"; that's where the students are, and that's where the resources need to go.

  - In doing so, we need to ensure that distance learning for higher education is not made available *ad hoc* based on geography, individual schools, course subject, or by professor. We need a coordinated effort to train teachers so that students will see it as a way to tap into educational opportunities previously unavailable to them.

  - In higher education, there is still a stigma associated with distance learning and online degrees. To eliminate that stigma, we should encourage elite institutions to embrace e-learning and improve the standards for distance learning. For instance, the National Science Foundation could provide a grant

for Harvard's e-learning program. *Frank Wu, George Washington University School of Law*.

B.   Roundtable Observations on Healthcare

Richard Manning, Senior Vice President, Strategic Projects & Services for WellMed Medical Group, presented on broadband applications for healthcare. WellMed uses broadband technologies to improve the quality of healthcare, cut costs, encourage people to seek care, and support non-professional caregivers (i.e., family members).

Mr. Manning made the business case for the use of healthcare management using electronic medical records ("EMR") and broadband technology, noting that the improved quality of healthcare using EMR results in reduced costs for providers, insurers, and patients. To that end, he recommended that America needs a complete transformation of the healthcare process to improve (1) the quality of patient care and (2) better chronic care management.

Specifically, Mr. Manning stressed the significance of caregivers, whom he described as an "underestimated and under-acknowledged group," in the effort to improve the quality and lower the cost of healthcare. Because caregivers generally make the decision to, for example, seek emergency medical care at night, they are making important decisions as to how healthcare dollars are spent. In addition, he indicated that caregivers themselves often have chronic illnesses that go untreated.

Mr. Manning reported that in his company's region in Texas, minorities make up the majority of many communities, and his constituents include many economically and socially disadvantaged individuals who are in need of massive healthcare initiatives. He noted that some 70,000 patients in his market are Medicare recipients and 52,000 of them are in the African American and Latino communities. He also noted the inherent limitations associated with the medical reimbursement processes for Medicare patients, which is exacerbated by the lack of broadband adoption.

Chronic care management through the medical home

WellMed has installed a model of chronic care management through the "medical home" to improve the quality of care, to improve the healthcare management process, and to reduce the number of mistakes that are made in healthcare diagnosis and treatment. In the medical home model, primary care clinicians and allied professionals provide conventional diagnostic and therapeutic services, as well as coordination of care for patients that require services not available in primary care settings. The primary care clinicians serve as advocates for patients and are paid to coordinate their care, thus averting unnecessary tests and procedures, hospital admissions, and avoidable complications.

Mr. Manning indicated that his company makes electronic medical records data available to the 530 doctors who are members of WellMed's network as well as to independent physicians who treat patients in WellMed's network. This sharing of data between hospitals and physicians through electronic medical records reduces redundancy in medical lab testing and brings analysis and reporting results back to the patient's primary care physician. He indicated that, by contrast, current web-based health records systems depend on patients to update them. This is a problem, particularly for senior citizen patients who are not tech-savvy. Instead, WellMed provides patients with a "care bracelet," a USB device that patients can take with them to any hospital or doctor to whom they are

referred. The device can be plugged into a USB port in order to print hard copy of the patient‚s medical records. In this way every physician in the patient's treatment chain will have a consistent list of medications, diagnoses, and lab results for the patient.

Finally, Mr. Manning noted that President Obama's desire to move toward a "prevention" model with respect to healthcare is consistent with WellMed's healthcare management efforts.

Conclusion

Mr. Manning concluded that transformation of the healthcare process can be facilitated through:

- EMR and broadband telehealth applications that enable patients to check in with their doctors for chronic conditions without the need to go for a doctor's visit or to a hospital;

- Increased portability of data/healthcare records;

- Technology standards training for hospital personnel, patients, doctors, and insurers.

Key Themes from the Roundtable Discussion on Healthcare

A number of members of the Roundtable weighed in on the significance of broadband adoption to chronic and acute medical care, especially for seniors and children. The most significant barriers to transitioning to electronic healthcare management and treatment cited by participants include: (1) the costs of transitioning medical records online; (2) training patients, doctors, hospital personnel and all others in the medical treatment chain; (3) educating all members of the chain on the significant benefits of using broadband and technology in the treatment and management of disease; and (4) the standardization of EMR systems. It was also noted that linguistic barriers to healthcare can be overcome by providing web-based information in different languages.

Ruth Perot, a health advocate for minority and underserved communities through her work with National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved (NHIT) and Summit Health Institute for Research and Education (SHIRE), expressed the importance of establishing a national policy to make sure that "no community is left behind" in the implementation of broadband to further national healthcare imperatives. She reported that the broadband technology adoption rate in community health centers is a mere eight percent. Emphasizing the importance of adoption, she said there is a need for targeted assistance and widespread consumer outreach efforts to let consumers know the benefits of using broadband in healthcare treatment. She also indicated that if privacy concerns about the digitization of medical records are not resolved, low adoption will continue. Finally, she echoed Marc Morial's concerns about the need to encourage minority participation at every decision-making level involving healthcare.

Representative Observations on Healthcare

- Standardization will expedite adoption in the health care realm. Doctors are reluctant to move online because they don't know what online medical records system to use. Transitioning medical records online is a high cost of doing business; you have to

retrain your personnel and shut down part of your practice while you transition. No one wants to do that and then find out your system is not compatible with someone else's. *Antoinette Cook Bush, Skadden/MMTC*.

- Mobile connectivity is already huge in the medical field. I sit on the board of a medical center and I am aware of the latest technological systems in the medical field, and the lack of their availability within the communities we serve. There is definitely a digital divide with respect to healthcare treatment and we need to do whatever we can to bridge it. *Franklin Urteaga, Former White House Technology Policy Staff*.

- Providing web-based information in different languages via broadband can help to bridge the language and cultural barriers to the provision of quality healthcare for communities of color. *Karen Narasaki, AAJC*.

C.   Roundtable Observations on Energy and the Environment

Adele C. Morris, Ph.D., Fellow & Deputy Director, Climate and Energy Economics, The Brookings Institution, made a presentation on how broadband technology can be used to reduce energy consumption.

Dr. Morris made an economic and social case for reducing the number of vehicles on the road in order to drastically curtail emissions reductions and to reduce America's carbon footprint. One way to achieve these reductions is to encourage American businesses to permit more "telework" or telecommuting. She said the U.S. government is in a good position to lead the telework effort and to create a working model for the business community by demonstrating its value.

Specifically, Dr. Morris said that broadband and its applications contain potential solutions to the energy and environmental concerns expressed by President Obama in his February 24, 2009 address to Congress. Citing President Obama's plan to place a market-based cap on greenhouse gas emissions, she said that such an approach could change the prices of goods and services, forcing businesses and consumers to change the way they produce and consume products, resulting in a massive economic shift. She indicated that the U.S. needs to set a goal of getting to "zero contributions" of greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere in order to protect the environment and to stabilize the concentration of gases for future generations.

Telework Initiative

In deciding how to reduce energy costs and their environmental consequences, Dr. Morris believes policymakers should focus on the costs of driving that drivers impose on others. The decision to drive imposes external costs through air pollution, lost productivity related to drive time, and traffic accidents. Lost time and the costs of traffic congestion are not sustainable, environmentally or socially. She said that the social costs of traffic accidents were estimated to be $433 billion in 2000 and that, in the DC metropolitan area alone, commuters lose 60 hours a year to traffic congestion, compared to the national average of 38 hours per year. The hours lost to congestion remain highest in Los Angeles at 72 hours per year. Not including the environmental costs, she reported that the cost in lost time due to driving to work is estimated to be $80 billion a year.

Conclusion

Dr. Morris said that a well-designed environmental policy will provide the opportunity for broadband applications to reduce future consumption of fossil fuels and to address environmental damage such as global climate change. Expressing optimism that smart buildings and smart homes will be increasingly viable in the near future, she made an appeal for the federal government to lead the telework effort and create a working model for the business community to emulate.

Dr. Morris concluded by highlighting some of the key challenges inhibiting companies from adopting telework policies – challenges that a federal telework initiative must seek to address:

- remotely monitoring productivity;

- privacy/data security;

- liability/insurance coverage for on-the-job injuries and accidents occurring in the home office;

- tech support;

- incorporating telecommuting into the corporate culture.

Key Themes from the Roundtable Discussion on Energy and the Environment

Roundtable participants collectively recognized that energy and environmental concerns might not be the highest priority in the Constituent Communities due to cost concerns and lack of knowledge, even though benefits such as reductions in energy consumption and creation of jobs could provide significant benefits to urban and rural disadvantaged communities, including senior citizens. Recognizing that members of the Constituent Communities probably do not have the resources and skills to prioritize these issues, participants placed that burden squarely on the shoulders of the Host Groups and other Roundtable participants, particularly in light of the rate at which federal stimulus dollars are being disbursed.

Representative Observations on Energy and the Environment

- We should look to synergistic models that have worked in other sectors. For example, in addressing energy consumption and environmental concerns, some companies found that it is cheaper to insulate homes than to build new generating capacity. Can that same rationale be applied to broadband? Would it be cheaper to facilitate broadband adoption and installation of "smart" homes technologies rather than build new generation? We should investigate whether there are models that will create incentives for our communities to promote broadband adoption harnessed to the desire to address energy consumption and environmental concerns. *John Nakahata, Harris Wiltshire*.

- Are we making a compelling argument for broadband within our constituent communities? The Obama Administration has made the decision that they are

devoting resources to broadband; many of us already experience its daily benefits, but a number of members of our community do not. We can't start with cost; we need to prioritize what is achievable, and identify what are the most critical goals for the communities that we serve. This is a high priority for the Administration, and money is being made available at the federal, state, and local level. We need to ask ourselves: How can we direct that money in ways that can be best used in the communities we are looking at? For example, with respect to Dr. Morris' telecommuting proposal – do people have resources and skills in their homes for telecommuting? The Administration's proposal about a smart grid for energy will help power companies to more efficiently use energy and reduce the costs of energy to consumers. One of the more obvious benefits of building the smart grid is that it will create jobs to put those systems in place. We need to ask ourselves questions so that we can prioritize what we want from the federal government, the locals, and the states for our constituents. And we need to address these issues quickly because the [economic stimulus] money will be spent quickly. *Antoinette Cook Bush*, *Skadden/MMTC*.

IV. Overarching Issues

Roundtable participants identified a number of overarching issues that would guide the group as it worked toward specific policy recommendations.

A. Adoption

While the range of opinions from the Roundtable Group was broad (and not always in total harmony), the majority of comments touched, in some way, upon the critical issue of "broadband adoption." Many participants expressed concern that members of their Constituent Communities were not subscribing to broadband not because they lacked access to broadband lines or even because of affordability; rather, participants reported that their constituents simply do not think that broadband provides anything of value to them. As a result, a number of Roundtable participants suggested that a goal of the Summit should be to establish a vision for "non-adopters" in their respective Constituent Communities that would break down barriers to adoption by showing them how broadband would improve their quality of life and save money, among other benefits.

It was generally agreed that the Host Groups can establish that vision and create a culture within their Constituent Communities that would result in an increase in the rate of broadband adoption. While 100% adoption is unlikely, the Host Group leaders were confident that, with assistance, they can significantly narrow the adoption gap in their communities. Host Group leaders also discussed the role of the federal government in increasing broadband adoption in communities that are not online through efforts such as the broadband stimulus provisions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ("ARRA" or "Recovery Act").

Representative Observations on Adoption

Several Roundtable participants echoed the poignant query of National Urban League CEO Marc Morial: "Do the people that we represent, i.e., the 'underserved' – do they 'get' it?" Do the

13

Constituent Communities understand why broadband adoption is so important, and do they understand the many ways in which it can improve the quality of their lives on a daily basis? Most members expressed concern that their constituents don't understand the meaning and the purpose of broadband, and believe that is the responsibility of the Host Groups, with the assistance and support of other members of the Roundtable, to "paint a vision" for the Constituent Communities of how life with broadband is essential to their ability to find employment, utilize customer service for most business enterprises, access e-government services, and to engage in meaningful civic participation.

There was a great deal of concern that if a full-scale effort to increase broadband adoption does not occur, the digital divide between information technology "haves" and "have nots" will continue to grow. There was also concern that the lack of relevant content (which is discussed later in the Report in Section IV "Creating Relevant Content"), is a particular adoption barrier for non-English speakers.

Broadband affordability was also addressed as a barrier to broadband adoption, particularly for low income consumers who often lack the equipment and training as well as the ability to pay for broadband service. The remarks of former FCC Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate reflected the various concerns about affordability as follows:

- To address concerns of affordability, the existing USF Lifeline and Link Up Programs should be expanded to include broadband access/connectivity and adoption efforts. In fact, the federal government should be looking holistically at every single source of funding – NTIA, RUS, FCC, USF, HHS, DOE, etc. - and should coordinate all these sources to subsidize broadband connectivity (e.g., computer or other device needed to connect to the Internet), and sustainable broadband adoption (e.g. price subsidies, digital literacy training, culturally relevant content) for low income consumers of color. *Deborah Taylor Tate, Former FCC Commissioner.*

Finally, concerns about privacy and cyber security, particularly as they relate to the collection of personal financial information and child online protection, were identified as important to efforts to increase broadband adoption because, in the words of Former FCC Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate: "we want everyone connected; however, we want them to be connected safely and responsibly".

The following are several comments that represent the concerns expressed by Roundtable members about adoption:

- We need to paint a picture of the future, but we first need to paint a picture of NOW and why adoption is so critical to everyday life. Increasingly, you can only apply online for jobs. Customer and constituent services by phone are almost useless. Access to health benefits and government services is moving online. Broadband adoption is not a luxury item: it touches everything we do. *Former FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani.*

- It is important to understand that most people don't know what we mean by broadband or adoption. We are the early adopters, and we need to help others – consumers, doctors, politicians, etc. – understand what adoption means. *Julia Johnson, NetCommunications.*

14

- Facilitating broadband deployment and adoption is historically analogous to building the interstate highway system of this half of the 21st century. Today, this highway is central to the delivery of services, reduction of costs, and improvements in the quality of life, particularly in the three vital policy areas under discussion today. Why isn't it the vision of this group to propose that there be a national goal, with appropriate *subsidies*, just like the highway system did in its infancy, to make sure that ALL Americans can participate in this 20th century Mecca of survival? *Former FCC Commissioner Tyrone Brown.*

- We need to build a culture of adoption in our respective Constituent Communities, and other communities that have low rates of broadband adoption. Broadband and IT are like "Darth Vader" to some of our constituents. There are a number of cultural factors going into the adoption equation. We need to ask our constituents to help us to determine how to build a culture of adoption. We need to help them solve questions like: How will my family's life be different in five years if I adopt broadband today? If five percent of non-adopters adopted, that's two million more broadband users – we can make a difference. *David Honig, MMTC.*

Rather than "reinvent the wheel," a number of participants indicated the importance of enabling members of the Constituent Communities to "build on what they have." For instance, one participant reported that a number of African Americans "over-index" with respect to cellphones and cable technology, and "under-index" with respect to broadband adoption, so other participants suggested that a good approach might be to assist people in leveraging their current technology devices, such as cellphones or PDAs, into broadband adoption and relevant applications.

- We need to focus on the current status of technology in lower income communities, e.g., can you support PDA's instead of buying laptops? We need to look into what can be done with the current technology to expedite adoption. *Fred Humphries, Microsoft.*

- It is important to understand the value of meeting people where they are, and allowing people to build on what they already have. African-Americans use many of these technologies more than others. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We need to work with people where they are and expand adoption. *Ruth Perot, National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved/Summit Health Institute for Research and Education (NHIT/SHIRE).*

B. Data Gathering

Most participants agreed that the importance of increasing broadband adoption rates in the Constituent Communities requires gathering better information on broadband adoption.

In 2007, the U.S. Census included questions about broadband in its annual Current Population Survey (CPS). While several participants recommended that the question of broadband adoption be inserted as a question in the Decennial Census, others suggested that this research should be conducted by one of the Host Groups, not the U.S. Census. Several members of the Host Groups recommended that a focus group/survey be conducted by the **Joint Center for Political and**

Economic Studies, (the "Joint Center") a Washington, DC-based national non-profit think tank (and a member of the Host Group) that conducts and disseminates research on public policy issues that are of special concern to African Americans and other people of color.

Participants agreed that "broadband mapping," of both availability and adoption, is a necessary prerequisite to increasing broadband adoption because, as one participant put it: "you can't evaluate what you don't measure." Roundtable participant John Nakahata reported that, in the Asian and Pacific Islander communities for example, the Census Bureau should measure broadband adoption in specific Asian and Pacific Islander ethnic groups, rather than just as Asian and Pacific Islanders in the aggregate, because high broadband adoption in some Asian and Pacific Islander communities can mask lack of adoption in others. Accordingly, in order to develop appropriately-targeted strategies for improving broadband adoption in low-adoption Asian and Pacific Islander communities, it is important to measure in which communities broadband adoption is succeeding, and in which communities further efforts are needed. He also said that 2004 census data are the last officially published on broadband adoption, but it is important to gather current data in the appropriate communities and distribute it if we are to improve broadband adoption rates in the Constituent Communities.

Similarly, David Honig of MMTC said that, based on the experiences of his organization's Rural Broadband Working Group, even when broadband is available in rural communities, it's not necessarily adopted due to concerns such as "affordability, lack of vision as to how it benefits them, lack of technical knowledge, language, and accessibility issues." Mr. Honig said it is important to collect data to determine which factors have the most impact on the demand side of broadband adoption in rural communities.

C. Seniors

Alexis Abramson, Ph.D, Vice President of Research for Retirement Living TV, reported that adoption – not access – is also the key issue for seniors. Citing an adoption gap for seniors over the age of 75, she detailed a number of ways in which the Roundtable Group could help seniors to understand how broadband can be beneficial, e.g., comparison shopping for prescription drugs, working from home to ease the burdens of fixed income, staying better in touch with family and loved ones, eliminating social isolation/depression, increasing access to news and information, and using telehealth applications such as home diabetes testing. Other members of the Roundtable Group acknowledged the importance of outreach to the seniors' community to increase adoption.

D. Standardization

The general consensus among Roundtable participants was that some level of standardization and interoperability is critical for adoption, particularly among institutions such as healthcare providers and educational institutions, which are reluctant to implement potential "killer applications" for broadband adoption for fear of picking a losing technology. The Roundtable Group noted that ARRA directs the Department of Health and Human Services to create a standard for electronic health records, which could serve as a model in other vital areas. Similarly, the "e-scrip" mandate, which would require all doctors participating in Medicare reimbursement to adopt electronic prescription practices by a certain date, represents another effort to achieve standardization and

interoperability. The consensus of the Roundtable Group was to convene stakeholders to develop a national imperative for standardization.

Representative Observations on Standardization

Some at the Roundtable suggested that the technology-driven free enterprise system is a barrier to accelerating broadband access and adoption through standardization. Noting that other countries subsidize the information technology infrastructure and the government dictates interoperability standards, speed, etc., some attendees asked whether we really want to move from free market policies to a more "top-down" approach in order to achieve the desired goals.

- We need to look globally at what is happening – at how fast other countries are moving because their infrastructure is in place, and applications are being built, dialogs are going on between countries. This is definitely another "Sputnik" moment. Unless we start doing what other countries are doing, we will continue to fall further behind and we won't even get to the question of where each of our [constituent] communities fit into the dialog. *Neil Horikoshi, APIA Scholarship Fund.*

- One challenge in this discussion is that, as a nation, unlike the EU, Japan, Korea, policies don't come from the top-down. Our society is very diffuse and diverse; policy is not driven by the federal government. Do we really want to move from the free market policies to a more top-down administration in order to achieve the desired goals? There are challenges and costs involved in trying to find a win-win solution and to figure out how to create opportunities for adoption in [the Constituent Communities]. *Mark Lloyd, LCCR.*

E. Aggregating Demand

The Roundtable Group agreed that geographic areas that lack sufficient broadband connectivity at the institutional level (e.g., government offices, healthcare systems, schools) can leverage their collective demand to reduce the price of construction, software licensing, training and other costs. It was noted that this model has already proven to work in some states and municipalities and should be encouraged at the grassroots level by participating groups.

Representative Observations on Aggregating Demand

- In the disadvantaged communities, we need to aggregate demand in order to create markets and surround them with the traditional supports. In order to create markets, you need to create ecosystems to understand the business aspects. We need to understand what is necessary for their community to become content producers/aggregators. For example, One Economy's "pic.tv" is an aggregation tool regarding health, education, money, and jobs, and they need more content on that network. We need to develop business models in the non-profit sector that are relevant to the community. *Tessie Guillermo, Zero Divide.*

- We need to aggregate markets that go beyond the "entitlement" mentality towards "self-sustainability." For example, a health client that delivers care around a chronic disease could go to pic.tv, tell them "this is our curriculum," and One Economy could

pay them for the content. We need to develop a curriculum like this for middle school use. *Richard Manning, WellMed*.

- We need to develop a model that encourages private sector investment. For example, putting adult ELL (English Language Learning) on cell phones so that students can learn while, for instance, taking the bus. This type of business model drives adoption, and makes it sustainable beyond the government putting the initial money in. *Karen Narasaki, AAJC*.

F.   Creating Relevant Content

There was widespread agreement that providing the Constituent Communities with online content that is meaningful to them will drive adoption. The Roundtable Group noted that there are early adopters and laggards in Constituent Communities just as there are in the larger population, and some of the laggards will need a nudge. One Economy's pic.tv has developed relevant but entertaining content such as its "*Diary of a Single Mom*" series, and an interactive "toolbox" called "The Beehive" that enables users to find out relevant information about single parenting, personal finance, tax preparation, home ownership, education, and healthy living.

In the words of one participant, providing content that helps people to solve their everyday problems creates "relevancy" that will drive up adoption. Others noted that "culturally- and linguistically-appropriate approaches" regarding broadband are required because "one size does not fit all."

Representative Observations on Creating Relevant Content

- There is a generational digital divide, and our youth are part of the solution through "reverse" demand education; they are well aware of all the uses and benefits and can be helpful to policymakers, not only in increasing the demand side of the equation, but also in actually assisting parents/grandparents/seniors in becoming technologically proficient. We need to know how best to reach/educate/include them because we need their input to better understand how to reach other youth who are not connected. Our kids are totally mobile, so any government strategies need to reflect that. And if we want youth to utilize broadband for e-government/healthcare/e-learning, they must be included in the development of "relevant" content. *Former FCC Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate*.

- The need to create relevant content is a particular barrier for non-English speakers who are greatly in need of relevant, useable, accessible multi-lingual information in order to drive adoption. *Karen K. Narasaki, AAJC*.

G.   Role of Private Enterprise/Public Private Partnerships and Non-Profits

The Roundtable Group generally agreed that the burden of promoting adoption need not fall on the public sector alone. In fact, the private sector can play a meaningful role in promoting the use of broadband, developing relevant content, and bridging the equipment divide.

Representative Observations on Public/Private Partnerships and Non-Profits

- In Washington, we tend to think in "issue silos" healthcare/education/energy/technology, but foundations/non-profits and government each can play an important role in convening people to tear down those silos. For example, Zero Divide has brought in fellows from different policy disciplines in the community who were not technology people to educate them on the possibilities of technology to help them achieve their program goals. Another example is when then Attorney General Reno brought together civil rights groups, police chiefs, cops on the beat, etc. in one room to force a dialog around issues such as racial profiling. In the case of broadband, the Obama White House can help to prevent issue silos by urging the right people to "get in the room" and generate solutions, collaboratively. *Karen Narasaki, AAJC*.

- Private enterprise can promote/market these ideas more effectively than government. *Richard Manning, WellMed*.

- The private sector has invested billions of dollars in the connections, now we need to encourage them to invest in the next step, and that is increasing *demand*, through public-private partnerships that assist in underwriting hardware/software/devices. In Tennessee through ConnectTV, the state and private corporations are partnering to provide low-cost laptops to foster care children so that they can remain "connected" no matter where they are placed or which school they attend. *Former FCC Commissioner Deborah Taylor Tate*.

- We need more programs like the one offered by a local non-profit that provides 10 weeks of free broadband to get seniors to recognize the value of broadband adoption. *Dr. Alexis Abramson, Retirement Living TV*.

- Private schools tend to have state-of-the art technology; could we develop a program that sends public school teachers to private schools for training? *Antoinette Cook Bush, Skadden/MMTC*.

H. Infrastructure Development/Speed

The issue of available broadband speeds was a somewhat contentious one for the Roundtable Group. The debate centered on whether current speeds are sufficient or whether America needs a broadband policy focused on achieving a specific threshold speed; and if the latter, what should that threshold be? Participants noted that establishing a single "gold standard" speed for all may be wasteful because the speed requirements for telehealth may be lesser than, for example, e-learning. The Roundtable Group agreed that research into the bandwidth needs of various applications within the vital policy areas would be timely. Members of the Roundtable also noted that the White House is uniquely situated to bring together the various stakeholders in the public and private sectors to conduct the appropriate research and to come up with viable solutions that take all the varying interests into account.

Representative Observations on Infrastructure Development/Speed

- In the minority communities, we need to focus on new infrastructure development for the Internet that will promote access to the most developed technology. If we are to imagine everyone being connected online, kids doing homework, first responders, public safety, etc., our networks need to be the most advanced. But perhaps the answer is that we need to get away from focusing on the "speed" for the network and focus on the future. *Mark Lloyd, LCCR*.

- Speed is important – "broadband" is described in many ways. If our goal is economic empowerment for the vulnerable and the disadvantaged, we need to determine at what speed. Under the broadband stimulus plan, the FCC must come up with a broadband plan within one year. We need to paint the picture for the FCC as well as for the communities that we care about. *Former FCC Commissioner Gloria Tristani*.

- The White House can bring the stakeholders together in the public and private sectors to conduct whatever research needs to be done and come up with viable solutions regarding infrastructure development and the appropriate broadband speed for the various applications. *Karen Narasaki, AAJC*.

I.   Investment Funds

The topic of providing seed capital to fund innovation in broadband – particularly for applications and programs that promote community-level investment in sustainable broadband adoption – arose several times during the discussions. Participants suggested a wide range of public and private funding mechanisms.

Representative Observations on Investment Funds

- The government and private sectors need to jointly develop a capital fund to seed enterprises in underdeveloped communities. It could be funding using ARRA dollars or other monies. The funding would be used for research to enable communities to develop their own technology applications at the local level then disseminate these applications to a larger market. The goal would be self-sufficiency and sustainability. *Laura Efurd, ZeroDivide*.

- The fund could be similar to InQTel, which is a venture capital fund funded by the CIA that invests in technology to improve national security – this could be an "InQTel" for community development technology. *Charlie Firestone, Aspen Institute*.

- Affordability of equipment is a barrier to access/adoption. We need to establish a micro-loan or investment fund that will keep equipment and service components affordable. *Howie Hodges, One Economy*.

- Consider incorporating a "Community Reinvestment Act" (CRA) model like the banking industry model – when government gives money to banks, it requires banks to re-invest in certain communities. *Antoinette Cook Bush*, *Skadden/MMTC*.

- With respect to affordability/disruptive technologies, there is no one solution– there is a need for funds/seed capital to evaluate many different solutions to achieving the larger goals. *John Nakahata*, *Harris*, *Wiltshire*.

J. Implementation

Noting the complexity of the issues, the barriers to their resolution, the "disbursed number of decision makers" at the federal, state and local levels, and the rapid changes in technology, Roundtable participants expressed the need for flexibility in implementing any policy recommendations.

Representative Observations on Implementation

- We are trying to develop through our session overarching, comprehensive national technology policy recommendations. People who receive our report need to understand clearly that we can empower them with our report. They can go back to their colleagues on the Hill and in the Administration with policies that will implement our ideas here today. We need to make sure what we recommend is flexible enough to accommodate ever-changing technology. We need to develop policies that we can implement right away; then we need to reach out to government and private sectors to ask them to collaborate and reach the stakeholders. *Franklin Urteaga, Former White House Technology Policy Staff*.

- Our organization has a lack of technical knowledge in this field; we have advocates, but we need to transfer their advocacy to other areas. We have the ability to better connect these dots in, for example, the school systems, in families, etc., to see what is working out there, but we want and need help with developing and implementing a broadband strategy for our communities. *Janet Murguia, NCLR*.

- Enhanced broadband/Internet accessibility is an imperative for the economic revitalization and advancement of this nation, and this is a shared responsibility between government and the public/private/community sectors. *Ruth Perot, National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved/Summit Health Institute for Research and Education (SHIRE)*.

V. Recommendations and Next Steps

Having identified a series of themes, goals, and barriers, the Roundtable Group agreed to develop issue-specific "Task Forces" dedicated to formulating specific policy proposals. Further, the Host Groups would reconvene as the "Broadband Opportunity Coalition" and invite others to participate. A primary focus of the Coalition would be increasing broadband adoption within the Constituent

Communities.   The Broadband Opportunity Coalition intends to be a resource to the Obama Administration and to Congress and will provide the following deliverables in the coming months.

A.   Broadband Adoption Program

The Host Groups agreed that their initial efforts would focus on establishing a "Broadband Adoption Program," with a focus on stimulating demand. Industry stakeholders need the assistance of the Host Groups to jointly develop and market a concept to the Constituent Communities articulating a vision of how their lives will be better in five years as a result of broadband adoption. The vision would specifically address benefits such as improved health, better educational opportunities, energy savings and other outcomes related to the vital policy areas. The goal is to convince a meaningful percentage of non-adopters within the constituent groups to adopt broadband.

B.   Focus Groups/Data/Research

In order to more effectively design the Broadband Adoption Program, the Host Groups identified the need for better data on the factors leading a high proportion of the Constituent Communities to decide against adopting broadband. Building on existing research from organizations like the Pew Internet & American Life Project, an organization such as the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies should be commissioned to conduct research, including surveys and focus groups, on these underlying reasons. The Roundtable Group recommended inclusion of focus group studies to gather data from the Constituent Communities along the following lines:

- Why don't you buy broadband?
  - Prioritization
  - Lack of interest/demand
  - No computers
  - Lack of explanation/training
  - Cost

- Did you know you could do the following with broadband?
  - Motor vehicle registration
  - Telecommuting
  - Access to medical records
  - Healthcare monitoring (e.g., diabetes and blood pressure testing)
  - Online shopping
  - Financial management

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The Broadband Opportunity Summit co-hosts and participants would like to acknowledge Comcast, Microsoft, Verizon and WellMed for supporting this unprecedented event and we look forward to engaging in dialogue with policymakers in all relevant branches of government as we forge America's broadband future.

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Marc Morial, President & CEO, National Urban League (NUL)
Janet Murguia, President & CEO, National Council of La Raza (NCLR)
Ralph B. Everett, President & CEO, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
David Honig, President & CEO, Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC)
Karen Narasaki, President & CEO, Asian American Justice Center (AAJC)

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Appendix I: Agenda for the First Broadband Opportunity Summit

8:30 a.m.   **Registration**

9:00 a.m.   **Welcome and Opening Remarks**
Mark Morial, *President & CEO, National Urban League*
Janet Murguia, *President & CEO, NCLR*
Ralph B. Everett, *President & CEO, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies*
David Honig, *President & CEO, Minority Media and Telecommunications Council*
Karen Narasaki, *President & CEO, Asian American Justice Center*
Charlie Firestone, Aspen Institute

9:30 a.m.   **Presentations**
Broadband Opportunity in Education: Susan Patrick, *President & CEO, International Association for K-12 Online Learning*
Broadband Opportunity in Healthcare: Richard Manning, *Senior Vice President, Strategic Projects & Services, WellMed*
Broadband Opportunity in Energy Conservation and Environmental Protection: Adele C. Morris, Ph.D., *Fellow & Deputy Director, Climate and Energy Economics, The Brookings Institution*

10:15 a.m.   **Open Discussion**

11:45 a.m.   **Review of Afternoon**
Charlie Firestone

11:50 a.m.   **Break**

12:00 p.m.   *WORKING LUNCH*

12:00 p.m.   **Education Policy Recommendation Discussion**

12:30 p.m.   **Healthcare Policy Recommendation Discussion**

1:00 p.m.   **Energy/Environment Policy Recommendation Discussion**

1:30 p.m.   **Review of Key Policy Recommendations**
Charlie Firestone

2:00 p.m.   **Wrap-up, Next Steps, Close**
Charlie Firestone

Appendix II: Roundtable Participants

Alexis Abramson, Ph.D., Vice President of Research, Retirement Living TV (RLTV), (Washington, DC)

Pierre Wright, Ph.D., Director of Government Affairs, Thurgood Marshall College Fund, (Washington, DC)

Tyrone Brown, Partner, Wiley Rein; former Commissioner, FCC; Member, MMTC Board of Advisors, (Washington, DC)

Maurita Coley, Partner, Davis Wright Tremaine; Vice Chair, MMTC; Chair, Access to Capital Working Group, MMTC **RAPPORTEUR**, (Washington, DC)

Antoinette Cook Bush, Partner, Skadden Arps; former Counsel, Senate Commerce Committee; Member, MMTC Board of Advisors, (Washington, DC)

Laura Efurd, Vice President and Chief Community Investment Officer, ZeroDivide; Former Assistant to the President and Deputy Director of the White House Office of Public Liaison; Former Associate Director of Legislative Affairs for the U.S. Department of Labor; Former Legislative Director to U.S. Rep. Patsy T. Mink, (San Francisco)

Ralph B. Everett, President and CEO, Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies CO-HOST, (Washington, DC)

Charlie Firestone, Executive Director, Communications and Society Program, Aspen Institute **FACILITATOR**, (Washington, DC)

Tessie Guillermo, President and CEO, Zero Divide, (San Francisco)

Howie Hodges, Senior Vice President of Business Development and Government Affairs, One Economy Corporation, (Washington, DC)

David Honig, President and Executive Director, Minority Media and Telecommunications Council (MMTC) **CO-HOST**, (Washington, DC)

Neil Horikoshi, President and Executive Director, Asian and Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund; Former Director, Global Business Development for IBM's Global Public Sector, (Washington, DC)

Fred Humphries, Managing Director, U.S. Government Affairs, Microsoft, (Washington, DC)

Julia Johnson, President, NetCommunications; former Chair, Florida Public Service Commission; former Chair, FCC Diversity Advisory Committee; Member, MMTC Board of Directors (Coral Gables, Florida)

Mark Lloyd, Vice President for Strategic Initiatives, Leadership Conference on Civil Rights (LCCR), (Washington, DC)

Richard Manning, Senior Vice President, Strategic Projects and Services, WellMed Medical Management, **PRESENTER**, (San Antonio, TX)

Marc Morial, President and CEO, National Urban League, **CO-HOST**, (New York)

Adele C. Morris, Ph.D., Fellow and Deputy Director, Climate and Energy Economics, The Brookings Institution, **PRESENTER**, (Washington, DC)

Alisa Mosley, Director of External Affairs, National Medical Association (Washington, DC)

Janet Murguia, President and CEO, NCLR, **CO-HOST**, (Washington, DC)

John Nakahata, Partner, Harris, Wiltshire, and Grannis; Former Chief of Staff, FCC, (Washington, DC)

Karen Narasaki, President and CEO, Asian American Justice Center (AAJC), **CO-HOST**, (Washington, DC)

Susan Patrick, President and CEO, International Association for K-12 Online Learning, **PRESENTER,** (Washington, DC)

Ruth T. Perot, Managing Director, National Health IT Collaborative for the Underserved (NHIT) and Executive Director, Summit Health Institute for Research and Education, Inc. (SHIRE), (Washington, DC)

Andres Ramirez, Vice President for Hispanic Programs, NDN, (Washington, DC)

Riley Temple, Partner, Temple Strategies, (Washington, DC)

Gloria Tristani, Of Counsel, Spiegel & McDiarmid LLP; former Commissioner, FCC; former Chair, New Mexico State Corporation Commission; Board Member, Children Now; Board Member, MMTC; Member, Hispanic Women's Council, (Washington, DC)

Deborah Taylor Tate, former Commissioner, FCC; former Chair; Tennessee Public Service Commission; Member, MMTC Board of Directors; founder of Tennessee's first clinic for low income women with AIDS (and their children), (Washington, DC)

Franklin Urteaga, CEO, Digital Coast Advisors, Los Angeles, CA; former Technology Policy Aide at the White House; former White House Technology Working Group member; Advisory Board, Business Week; Board Member, St. Vincent's Medical Center Foundation; former Board Member, J-Date.com; Board Member, Los Angeles Business Technology Center, (Los Angeles, CA)

Frank H. Wu, Visiting Professor of Law, George Washington University Law School, Washington, D.C.; Former Dean, Wayne State University Law School, (Washington, DC)

March 31, 2009

Via Hand Delivery

The Honorable Michael J. Copps
Acting Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: **Broadband Opportunity Policies**

Dear Chairman Copps:

As the representatives of policy organizations who represent the interests of people of color in urban and rural communities, we write to applaud your decision to initiate a comprehensive review of the FCC's role in formulating a "national broadband policy," and we look forward to participating fully in your deliberations in the coming months.

We agree with you that an effective national broadband plan requires an interdisciplinary, interagency approach. The FCC must lead a concerted effort by all federal agencies to move from narrowband policies that serve as barriers to the ability of all Americans to benefit from the broadband age.

Broadband Opportunity Summit
We recently convened a gathering of leaders to discuss and determine how broadband policies in the new Administration can advance minority communities in key areas such as education, healthcare, and energy. The Broadband Opportunity Summit (the "Summit") that our five organizations recently hosted in Washington, DC on February 25, 2009, included a group of 30 representatives of diverse organizations, which discussed many of the topics that Section 6001(k) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act ("ARRA") instructs the Commission to investigate. Specifically, we focused on how current government policies may serve as barriers in the areas of education, healthcare, and energy and the environment. We discussed what steps the government can take to ensure the "maximum utilization of broadband infrastructure and service by the public" to "advanc[e] consumer welfare, civic participation, public safety …community development, health care delivery, energy independence and efficiency, education, worker training, private sector investment, entrepreneurial activity, job creation and economic growth, and other national purposes..." including, from our

perspective, attention to minority business and disadvantaged workers participation and training. As a result of the Summit, we are in the process of developing the foundation for a broadband opportunity coalition composed of organizations who represent the interests and concerns of our most vulnerable communities in these areas.

With that context, we'd like to share with you and your colleagues some of our observations on how the Commission can work with other federal agencies to develop a national broadband policy that achieves these statutory goals. As you will note, identifying strategies that will increase adoption of broadband services in vulnerable communities was the Summit's principal finding.

Healthcare
The Obama administration's goal of reforming our healthcare system in order to reduce the cost of, and increase access to, care could benefit greatly from wider adoption of broadband. One take-away from our Summit was that, if healthcare institutions embrace telemedicine services and ensure patient privacy, we might see an increase in broadband adoption among households that currently do not subscribe. We noted that a national standard for portable electronic health records, developed by the Department of Health and Human Services as directed by the Act, is an important step in encouraging patients to take a more active role in their care – and encouraging their subscription to broadband in the process. The participants also discussed that regulations requiring doctors participating in Medicare and Medicaid to use electronic prescriptions by a certain date would help drive the demand for broadband, but that more must be done in the area of reimbursement of broadband-delivered care.

Energy
As America attempts to "go green," policymakers and environmental scientists alike are rethinking how we build homes, how we travel, how we consume, and even how we work. Our roundtable participants focused on ways to encourage businesses to adopt more flexible telework/telecommuting policies to reduce traffic, reduce harmful emissions, and increase employee productivity. Unfortunately, many businesses are fearful of embracing telework for a variety of reasons, including data privacy, liability for at-home accidents, and employee monitoring. In view of these concerns, a role for the federal government, through a combination of energy, employment and tax policy, could be to provide the blueprint for effective telework policies, encouraging more people to work from home and thereby pushing increased broadband adoption.

Education
In the area of education policy, we learned of America's declining global position in students' access to "e-learning." Policy experts in this field noted that the top ten countries in terms of e-learning access share a common trait that America lacks: a

nationally-standardized K-12 curriculum. Federal law currently prohibits the Department of Education from developing such a curriculum, leading to a school district by school district patchwork of standards that often preclude distance learning. Furthermore, teacher training in 21st Century classroom skills is inconsistent. Many teachers do not know how to use the technologies themselves, let alone how to effectively employ them in (and out of) the classroom, and lack incentives to do so. Policy changes that would enable the Department of Education to create a unified e-learning policy can help ensure that a world-class education is available to every child in America.

Conclusion

There are, of course, many more opportunities for federal agencies to benefit from and boost adoption of broadband, and we believe that we are uniquely suited to assist in formulating policies that are inclusive of the communities that we represent. For instance, one of our roundtable participants has worked with state and local housing agencies to ensure that new or modernized public housing complexes are wired with high-speed communications infrastructure; the Department of Housing and Urban Development should explore policies to promote this approach. Another one of our participants has worked with language minority communities and has experience with the ways in which broadband can improve access to critical translated information in their communities, particularly in the areas of healthcare and public safety. Based on their experiences, they believe that broadband offers promising solutions involving ELL (English Language Learner) instruction for this community.

As a result of the Summit, further public dialog with other federal agencies on how their policies can be adapted or changed to expand America's broadband opportunities is needed. With leadership from the FCC, collectively we can give America the kind of comprehensive, holistic policy that leading broadband nations have adopted.

We trust these preliminary thoughts provide guidance to you and the Commission as you work toward adoption of a Notice of Inquiry at the Commission's planned April 8th Open Meeting. We again salute your inclusive approach to setting the nation's broadband policy. Thank you for you leadership on this matter and we look forward to working with you and your colleagues on this important proceeding in the months ahead.
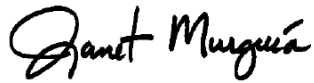
Sincerely,

Marc Morial
President & CEO
National Urban League

Janet Murguia
President & CEO
National Council of La Raza

Ralph B. Everett
President & CEO
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

David Honig
President & CEO
Minority Media and Telecommunications Council

Karen Narasaki
President & CEO
Asian American Justice Center

CC: Commissioner Jonathan Adelstein
       Commissioner Robert McDowell

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